

The Truth in Jesus (Part 3)

by Ron Bailey

Ron Bailey emphasizes the importance of shedding the old self and embracing a renewed life in Christ through cooperation with God.

Duration: 45:48

Scripture: Romans 6:1-7, Ephesians 4:20

Topics: "Truth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on his role as a Bible teacher and the importance of walking in faith. He shares a personal experiment he conducted to understand the pace of a man wearing a robe and sandals while carrying something. The speaker emphasizes that walking is a simple yet powerful process, and it is a great leveler regardless of one's status or experience. He references God's command to Abraham to walk before Him and be perfect, highlighting the significance of God Almighty as the source of provision. The sermon also touches on the speaker's experience of fulfilling the Great Commission and the common question he receives about the state of Warrington.

Transcript

Last night's meeting, I was having a conversation with someone. It was an interesting conversation. Didn't last for very long.

It is a conversation I've had before. In fact, it's a recurring conversation. I have it every few years, with different people and the details are different.

I remember having it with our dear brother Edgar Parting, a parking on one occasion. These aren't the exact details, but it goes like something like this. I'm sitting down in a meeting or maybe at a meal table and someone comes and sits by my side and we begin to talk and he says, what are you doing now? And I begin to tell him what I'm doing now.

And then he begins to say or she begins to say, some time in the past where there was a meeting and I spoke and it was such a blessing to them and I sort of duly bow my head in humility, glowing inside. And it goes on and they say, and we enjoyed your joke so much and the way you tell the stories is wonderful. And at this point of the conversation, I always know what's going to come next.

What comes next is a question. It's one of two questions. It's always, how are things at Warrington? Or, how is Gwen? Well, for some of you who don't know John Norris very well, there have been occasions when even members of my family have got us mixed up.

And it's not helped by the fact that on occasion, John Norris with his customary helpfulness actually introduces me to people as John Norris. So, whatever I share with you today, please don't blame it on John or on the committee or even ultimately on me. These things that we share aren't intended to be the final definitive statements.

They're not intended to be the policy or statements of what the fellowships believe. They're our opportunity to share what God is saying in our hearts. And we've spent two occasions together when we spoke first of all of the old man, or first of all of the old man and then secondly of the new man.

And I said this morning I wanted to ask the question, what then? If it was possible, I would love to sort of rearrange what's happened in the conference, just to alter the order of things. Derek Harrison made some comment about him following me. I would really like to say lots of the things that I have said, having followed what the Lord said to us on the night when he opened to us Luke chapter 15 and the prodigal and repentance.

Because what I'm really saying needs to follow what was said then. What I want to say, I would also really like to put into the context of what the Lord was saying and doing amongst us yesterday morning. I think this is a very significant time for us.

I have a sense that God is renewing to us opportunities. He is the God of the prodigal, whether it's the prodigal son or a prodigal king or a prodigal prophet or a prodigal wife or the prodigal fellowships or whatever. He's the God who is always willing to come and begin again when there is repentance and a determination in the heart just to arise and go God's way.

What the Lord was saying and doing amongst us yesterday morning was very, very precious, very special. There are occasions when people say that you need to put the go back into the gospel. I suppose that's true.

But we need to understand as well that behind the go there is an O. There's a great longing in the heart of God. There's a little word that you get in the Old and in the New Testament and sometimes it's just O on its own, sometimes it has an H before it, sometimes it has an H behind it. It's hardly a word, it's just a groan which comes from the heart of God.

I think we heard it yesterday morning. And what I want to share today has direct relevance to God's longing to move through a people that he has prepared for himself in order to reach those for whom he still groans. Maybe you've heard the story, I guess you will have done, of a man named David Garrick.

He was a very famous actor in the times of Wesley and Whitfield. He has a plaque, I think, in Westminster Abbey or somewhere like that. And on one occasion he went to hear George Whitfield preach.

He wanted to watch and see some of his skills and abilities. And then when he came back from the meeting, someone said to him, well, what did you think about George Whitfield and his preaching? And he said, I would give a hundred guineas to be able to say O like that man. I don't think it was something that George Whitfield had learned, it was something he had heard.

He had heard the great O in the heart of God, the great ache. I want to read a couple of passages of Scripture and then share from them. The first one is Romans and chapter 6. The two sessions we've spent, we've really been paying attention to what God has done, what God has done in Christ.

And today we need to look to our part and say, what does God require and expect of us in all this? I'll read from verse 1 of chapter 6. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death. That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be made powerless, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more, death has no longer dominion over him. For him that he died, he died unto sin once.

But in that he lives, he lives unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, but you should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid! Do you not know that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness.

But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you. Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness. Without commenting on that for a moment, I want to read from Paul's letter to the Ephesians, which was where we began these readings on Monday morning.

Ephesians chapter 4. I'll miss out the past part and just move on to the present from verse 20. Ephesians chapter 4 verse 20, where Paul by the Spirit of God writes this, But you have not so learned Christ, if so be that you heard him and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus, that ye put off concerning the former way of life, the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts, and be being renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. I'd like to read on to the end of the chapter, but I won't and I hope to come back to it at the end of what I want to say.

Maybe you noticed in this passage that Paul begins to say that you are to do something. He says, you put off the old man. He says, you put on the new.

Did you notice that? He says, this is what they were taught. He says, they were taught by Christ, verse 20, if you have heard him, if you've been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus, this is what they were taught. They were taught by Christ to put off the old man.

They were taught to be being renewed. That's passive. That's something that has to happen to you by your cooperation with God.

And then in verse 24, again, your responsibility that you put on the new man. When Paul writes to the Romans, he says that you are to mortify by the Spirit the deeds of the body. That's to say God begins to apply these things now to us.

We begin to be involved in what God is doing. This is because God is absolutely determined not to impose salvation on us, but to give us salvation as a gift that we must receive and we must learn to cooperate with Him. We must do the works that we see our Father doing.

We must agree with Him. We must cooperate with Him. God could have imposed everything He wanted on every part of the creation.

He could have just written a script and then unfolded the thing verse by verse. But He had determined that men and women shall be involved with Him in this thing. Otherwise, there would no longer be men and women.

There would be some kind of machine, some automaton, some robot, something programmed in a certain direction. And that isn't the way that God made us. Salvation is a very wonderful thing.

It's a very wonderful gift that God has given to us. You don't usually impose gifts upon people. You give them, and those who have them given are required to receive them.

I want to go back to that Romans passage and just begin to open up or unpack some of the things that are there. He says this. This is chapter 6 of Romans.

I just want to pick in at verse 9 and then point out it isn't an alliteration or an acrostic or anything clever. There's just a little list of things here that I want to draw attention to. In verse 9 He says this, knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dies no more, death no longer has dominion over Him.

He says knowing, and this is the word that I referred to earlier on, which really means perceiving that or seeing that. It's not the knowledge that comes by education. It's not the knowledge that comes because someone has passed information on to you.

It's a perception. It's something you see. Seeing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dies no more, death no longer has dominion over Him.

For in that He died, He died to sin once. But in that He lives, He lives to God. And then in verse 11 it says this, likewise reckon.

So we move from knowing or seeing to reckoning. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. This word reckon is a word that Paul has used earlier on in the passage.

In fact it's a word that is translated by seven different words in our authorized version and by seven different words in the New King James Version. There are some Bible words which have a wonderful history and a wonderful purpose in them and it's good that we really get a hold of them. You know that you don't have to use Bible words to convey Bible truth.

God can use all kinds of means to convey truth. But when you use Bible words it's important as far as we're able to use Bible words carefully. You don't have to use Bible words.

You can just simply use the words that are expression of your own heart. Maybe you remember that in Acts chapter 17 Paul quoted from a poet, not a Bible verse at all, but he used something which would be a point of access. We had an illustration last night.

Some of us have listened to Mr. Knorr for quite some time so we are used to his vocabulary. But for some others you may have heard a new word last night, the word blubbed. I think the phrase was Abraham blubbed and I think the full sentence was Abraham blubbed when he went down to Egypt.

Now it's difficult to give a precise theological definition to the word blubbed but that didn't hinder the truth that God was speaking to us. You don't need to use Bible words but if you do use Bible words it's important that you use Bible words as carefully as you can. Otherwise you get into the most appalling muddles.

Now you may quote Shakespeare and say well surely a rose by any other name smells as sweet. Let me illustrate it very foolishly. Suppose you were to have a dog and you decided to call it a goldfish.

Now this would have no impact upon the dog. I don't suppose it would be very upset at all unless you got hold of a manual on goldfish and decided that you were going to deal with your dog according to the terms of the manual and its home was going to be under water in a glass tank and its main food was going to be ants eggs or something. Now it begins to have serious implications for the dog, the label that you've given it.

So when you use Bible words it is important as far as possible to use them as carefully as you can. In fact we would save ourselves a tremendous amount of heartache if we did. We really would.

Let me give you two illustrations. Just two words and I'm not going to go into detail. The word guilty and the word condemnation.

Those words have nothing at all to do with feelings. They are technical words from the law court. It isn't a question of whether you feel guilty.

Or whether you feel condemned. It's a question of what the judge says. That's what matters.

If you begin to understand the way that the Bible uses words like guilty and condemnation you will understand why you feel bad at times and you'll understand that it's not because the judge is doing or saying things but because the accuser is doing or saying things. And they're not the verdicts of the judge. They are an attack which is coming from a certain direction and you need to know how to deal with it.

Anyway, I just want to draw attention to this word reckon. I think the New King James Version in chapter 4 where it's used a lot uses most often the word count. You can count on it.

You can count on it. Reckon on this thing. Verse 11 then, Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed to sin.

Count on it. Base your life on it. Base your expectations on it.

But alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And then verse 12 says this, And let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in the lusts thereof. Don't allow sin to reign.

Sin no longer has any right to reign. It no longer has any power over you. You must not allow it to exercise a power that it does not have.

The devil is a liar. You must not come under his lies and yield to them. Don't let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Verse 13, Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin. This word yield or present. Don't give yourself to sin.

Don't yield. Don't surrender to sin. Don't do what sin tells you.

Don't bow the knee to sin. Don't let sin reign. Don't let sin tell you what to do.

Don't yield to sin. Then he says this, But do yield yourselves to God. I can remember when my mother used to wash our kitchen at home and put newspaper down.

I never could get past the newspaper without having it around my feet in a little ball. That's why I just had to move those forms out of the way. I'm sorry they were getting under my feet.

Don't yield yourself to sin. Yield yourself to God. There's an old story told.

If there are any French here, please excuse this illustration. There's an old story told about Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo. And apparently after the battle, some French generals came to his tent to sign the instruments of surrender and began to commend him on his strategy and on the caliber of his soldiers, etc.

And so the story goes, Wellington listened to this for some time and then he said, Gentlemen, I appreciate your admiration, but this is a surrender. Yield me up your swords. This relationship we have with Jesus Christ is not a question of admiration.

It's not a question of us just agreeing with things nominally. It's a question of total surrender. Yield up your weapons.

Not to sin. Yield them up to Jesus Christ. Put them back into His hands.

That's what you're to do. They're His. Let's look at some of these things.

Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. Count on it. Count on it.

Believe what God has said. One of the people that the New Testament constantly turns back to is Abraham as an illustration because Abraham is the father of believers. Abraham was the man who believed God.

When God said, Go, we heard it last night. These are just footnotes to what was said last night. When God said, Go, this man went, not knowing where he was going.

I'm not exactly a scientist. I think I'm a frustrated scientist. I like to try and work things out and experiment.

Last night when I went back to the corner where I'm sleeping, I decided I would try and experiment. So, I put on a pair of sandals and I put something on my shoulder to try and carry it and wrapped a big bath towel around me and paced out the floor to try and work something out. I wanted to see how long a man's pace is when you're wearing a robe and sandals and you're carrying something.

You know, you have to do all kinds of research if you're going to be a Bible teacher. I reckon, I mean, I was walking on Malcolm's Axminster, remember, so it's nice and flat. But I was trying to work out how many steps Abraham took because in Romans chapter 4, Paul speaks about the steps of the faith of Abraham.

I reckon that if you're wearing something like a robe and you're carrying something on your shoulder and you're wearing sandals, you probably need about a step and a half to cover a yard. So, I then got my Bible map at the back of my book and I worked out that from the time that God first began to speak to Abraham, I reckon He covered something like about 1,500 miles. That's 1,760 times one and a half times 1,500.

It's close on four million steps. There are some people who think of faith as a giant leap, some spectacular thing that has to happen. More often than not, faith is a step, just a step, just the next thing, just the next step.

He wasn't wearing seven-league boots. He wasn't transported from Ur of the Chaldees to the place where God wanted him to be. He walked step by step.

There's a wonderful thing about walking. It's a great level up. It doesn't matter who you are.

It doesn't matter how long you've been on the way. If you walk, you probably walk like everybody else, that's to say, one step in front of another. It's a simple process, but it's never been improved upon.

It's just simply, you take one step, and then you take another one. Now, I know when you're little, it requires a great amount of concentration. And you see a baby taking its first steps, and everything is focused, and it gets its balance, and it takes the one step, and the grandparents cheer, and the baby wonders what on earth it's done.

And it's wonderfully exciting. And I know I do it all the time, and no one passes a comment. But I'm doing exactly what I did then.

I haven't got any better at this. It's just one step after the next, after the next. God once said this to Abraham.

He said, Abraham, after Abraham had blubbed a second time, God says to Abraham, Abraham, I am God Almighty. Walk before Me, and be perfect. There's great significance in the names that God gives to Himself.

God Almighty, El Shaddai, shatters the breast. It's a picture of God in His almightiness, not in terms of muscle and prowess, but it's a picture of God in terms of His provision. He is the source of all provision.

I really felt as though I was getting somewhere when Bernard was talking about fulfilling certain parts of the Great Commission. Maybe you know that we have seven children. I thought that was doing quite well until I went to Romania where they regard it as an encouraging start.

But we love babies, and we've had lots of them. And it's wonderful to see a baby feeding. I understand its eyes are pre-focused just about at the distance so that mum's face is in clear focus when the baby is feeding.

At that one point, in the whole of the universe, the baby has everything it needs. It has warmth and comfort and security in its mother's arms. It has face-to-face fellowship.

Everything there. God says to Abraham, Abraham, I am God. I am El Shaddai.

I am the God of perfect and full provision. Notice the focus. Not, Abraham, walk before me.

This is all your responsibility. Abraham, listen who's talking to you. I am the God of all provision.

I am the God who has everything you want, everything you could ever need, Abraham. Walk before me and be perfect. Just take a step at a time.

Just do the next thing that I tell you to do. God had spoken to Abraham earlier, and Abraham became the first believer. He became the first man who believed God.

That's what it says here in Romans. Let's go back just a little bit to Romans 4. Romans chapter 4. I'll read the first three verses. What shall we say then that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he has something to shout about.

He has whereof to glory, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. So, Abraham believed God.

He leaned all the weight of this promise of God upon God Himself. It's really what the Hebrew word for faith really means. It has to do with foundations and things which are load-bearing.

He put all the load upon God. He amended God. He put all his confidence in God, and God reckoned that to Abraham as righteousness.

There's a wonderful story that I know some years ago one of our brothers preached on. It's in the Acts of the Apostles. It's Acts chapter 27.

It's this story of the shipwreck. And I'm not going to read all of it, but I'd just like to read a short portion of it just to get the atmosphere of what was happening here. I'll read from verse 17.

Oh no, verse 16. Acts chapter 27. And running under a certain island, which is called Claudia, we had much work to come by the boat.

These galleys used to tow a little boat behind them, which they used at times to move the head around if they were trying to negotiate. And this was in the rear, and they managed to get it on board in the midst of this storm. Verse 17.

Which when they had taken up, they used helps under girding the ship. That's to say they passed ropes underneath the ship and tightened them. This boat was threatening to be torn apart by the pressures that

were upon it.

And the sailors, as they used to do in those days, passed ropes underneath, tightened them to hold the whole boat together. Which when they had taken up, they used helps under girding the ship. And fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, they struck sail and so were driven.

I'm no sailor, but there's no way they can control this boat. So they bring the sail down. Verse 18.

And we being exceedingly tossed with tempest, the next day we lightened the ship. They began to throw out the cargo. The third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

Now anything that can be spared has to go. These really are desperate straits. Verse 20.

And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, as to say they had no point of reference. There was nothing by which they could navigate. They had no idea where they were now.

They haven't seen any stars or sun for three days. They've been beaten backwards and forwards up the Mediterranean. They're utterly lost.

And no small tempest lay upon us. All hope that we should be saved was then taken away. But after long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them and said, Sirs, you should have hearkened to me and not loose from Crete and to have gained this harm and loss.

And now I exhort you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you but of the ship. And there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul. Thou must be brought before Caesar.

And lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God that it shall be, even as it was told me." You can read that, and it all sounds very calm and wonderful. And then you begin to use your imagination and you think of the scene on the death of this boat where the timbers are creaking fit to burst at any moment, where the sodden sails have been brought down and they've given all hope of controlling the boat, where they've got absolutely no idea where they are.

They haven't seen a star or the sun to navigate by for three days, when they've cast out everything that they can cast out. In the midst of this stinging salt spray and howling wind, Paul says, Be of good cheer. I believe God.

I don't know what everyone else was believing. Maybe they were believing the creaking of the timbers. Maybe they were believing the wind whistling through the rigging.

I don't know what they were believing, but Paul was believing God. I believe God. You see, Abraham believed God, not considering the deadness of his own body or the deadness of Sarah's womb.

Those weren't the things that he based his life upon any longer. Those weren't the things that he counted on any longer. What he counted on was what God had said to him.

That's why when I began this little series, I read from Ephesians, because these aren't just Bible verses we're talking about. It has to be Jesus who speaks to us. It has to be God who speaks to it.

And it has to be the word that comes to our heart from God, not because we're believing some doctrine that our church holds or doesn't hold or whatever, not even because we believe it to be doctrinally sound, but because in our hearts we've heard something that God has said and we believe God. And we stake everything on what God has said. We reckon on the reality of what God has said.

I wonder if I've just got time to just try to illustrate. Some of you may have heard me tell this little story before. When I was in my early twenties, I was very, very involved and busy in evangelical work and in the beginnings of the charismatic movement in this country.

But in my heart there were longings and in my life there were things that I still had no power over at all. And on one occasion we'd had a typically very busy Sunday. We used to have seven meetings on a Sunday.

And we'd had a very busy Sunday. And the final meeting had been an open-air meeting in the middle of the town. I think that's why I stand so still when I preach.

My first preaching was standing on a chair in the middle of a town in Burslem and you don't get to move about very much. So, I think that's why I stand so still. So, we used to have this open-air meeting and then I'd go back home.

And I'd been married just maybe about a year and a half or something like that. And I got home late at night, near on midnight, and my wife had locked the door and I hadn't taken my key with me. So, I knocked on the door and there was no response.

I ought to explain. I shall get in trouble for this. I ought to explain that my wife and I, we don't actually sleep.

We die until morning, both of us. So, I knocked and there was no response. And I knocked and I was tired and there was no response.

And I carried on knocking and great anger began to well up inside me. This wasn't fair. It wasn't reasonable.

So, I was pounding on the door. We lived at this time in a little flat above a post office. And we used to go up wooden stairs to it.

In sheer anger, I decided that I would climb in through a window. I began to climb in through the window. As I went through the window, it stripped the buttons off my sports coat, which rattled down the stairs and went into the cellar of the post office below.

I then forced myself through the window in sheer anger. As I went through, the window closed on my leg. It took all the skin from my shin and left me hanging upside down with my coat around my ears.

You've obviously got the same kind of sense of humor my wife has got. Because when she finally rose from the dead and came to see what was happening, this was her reaction. Well, it wasn't my reaction.

I was absolutely livid. I extricated my foot from this window. And I was so angry, I didn't dare to be close to her.

I was worried. I didn't know what I might do. There was a great violence in my family anyway in the past.

I went through the flat slamming doors. I just didn't want to be anywhere. I went to the top where there was a little room and just sat there in the semi-gloom, just calming down.

And as I began to calm down, there came to me a terrible realization of what was still in me, of what I really was still like. And at that time, I still do, I had a real concern for the glory of God, for God's reputation. And when I thought about what I'd just spent the whole day doing and what I'd spent the last half hour doing, I just asked God to take me.

And I said, Lord, I can't live with this. I'm sick to death of myself. I can't live with this.

Take me home. If you don't take me home, I'm going to ruin anything that you ever want me to do down here. Take me home.

Or do something else. I didn't know what else there was that God might want to do. I hadn't come from the kind of background where anyone had given me any hope that God could do anything else.

And then in tears, just crying to God, I was just leafing through my Bible, and I came to Colossians. Colossians, it was the Word of God to me. It was Jesus speaking, and He said, You're dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

And I believed Him. I'm glad I didn't understand the theology. I'm glad I didn't understand the tenses.

I'm glad I didn't understand any of those things. I'm glad I just believed the Word of God at that time and received the good of which He'd spoken to me. And it broke it.

It broke the power of things that would have destroyed me and everybody around me. You have to hear what God says to you. Walk before me and be perfect.

Listen, Abraham, to what I'm saying to you. Do the thing that I tell you to do. You may have looked at these things and you say, Well, it all sounds so easy when Paul says this.

We just read it in Ephesians. I'll turn to it. Put off concerning the former way of life, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be being renewed in the spirit of your mind that you put on the new man.

And you may say, Well, that's easier to say than to do. It's not. It's actually easier to do than to say.

Do you know what it cost the Lord to make it possible for Him to say, Put it off. It no longer has any power over you. It no longer has the strength that it's held you in.

The stranglehold is broken. You can put it off now. You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you might know His riches.

He took on the old man, took it down into death with Him, stripped it off, rose up in the power of a resurrection life that had passed through death without spot and left every trace of it all behind. And from that that He has done by His death, from that treasury, from that bank balance account, He now speaks and He says, Because I have done this, because I have broken this power, you just put it off. And you say, well, when? When you hear Him speak, that's the time to do it.

You may say, well, doctrinally. Don't worry too much at this point about doctrinally. Just listen to what He's saying to you.

It's now the time He's saying to you, I have done this, I have done this. I've broken this, I have inaugurated this. Put off this and put on this.

Just listen to Him. Believe Him and do what He says. Do you remember the story of the man who was in a synagogue? He had a withered right arm and on one occasion the Lord Jesus was in that synagogue and spoke to him and the word of Jesus came to him and the word was, Stretch forth your hand.

Now, he could have considered other things. He could have said, but that's the problem, I can't stretch forth this hand, it's withered. That's my problem.

My problem is I've had this withered hand for a long, long time. That's really my problem. I need you to do something for me before I can stretch forth my hand.

No, you don't. There is power in His word. If He speaks to you, you can do it.

Do the thing that you know you can't do at the word of Jesus Christ. That's why we need to hear the truth as it is in Jesus, as you're taught in Him, not to conform to some doctrinal standard that the fellowships or someone teach, but because this word of God comes and says, now's the time, strip it off. It's no big deal.

I don't want to make it trite, but it's not. It's not a lot of trouble. Norman, tell me to take off my way scope, please.

Now, that really wasn't hard work at all, was it? That was no big deal. God has done something. He has done everything so that He can simply speak to you and say, all right, because of what I have done, strip it off now.

It's lifeless. It has no power of you. Strip it off, finish with it.

Put on the new. Do it because I say it. And then listen to what He goes on to say.

This is verse 25 if you want to follow it. I'll read from verse 24. And that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Wherefore, having put away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be ye angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down on your wrath.

Do it. Don't struggle over it. Just do it.

Let not the sun go down on your wrath. Neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more.

Don't struggle with it. Just stop it. As the Word of God comes to you, just stop it.

But rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers. Oh, be slow to speak, James says, doesn't he? If we just pause for a moment and ask the question, will the sentence that I am now going to speak build up, my brother? Will it minister grace to my brother? If we pause and ask those two questions, maybe we'll be slower to speak.

And grieve not the Holy Spirit, whereby you're sealed to the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children. And walk, not giant leaps, walk. Walk in love.

God said to us this week that there are works foreordained that we should walk in them. Just step by step, just listening to the thing that God says to our heart and believing Him. In the midst of the turmoil, in the midst of the pandemonium, in the midst of all kinds of...

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